



US Army Corps  
of Engineers  
Baltimore District

# The Corps' pondent

a newsletter by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for the residents of Spring Valley

June/July 2001

## Area-wide soil sampling moves forward

by Maj. Michael Peloquin  
Spring Valley Operations Officer

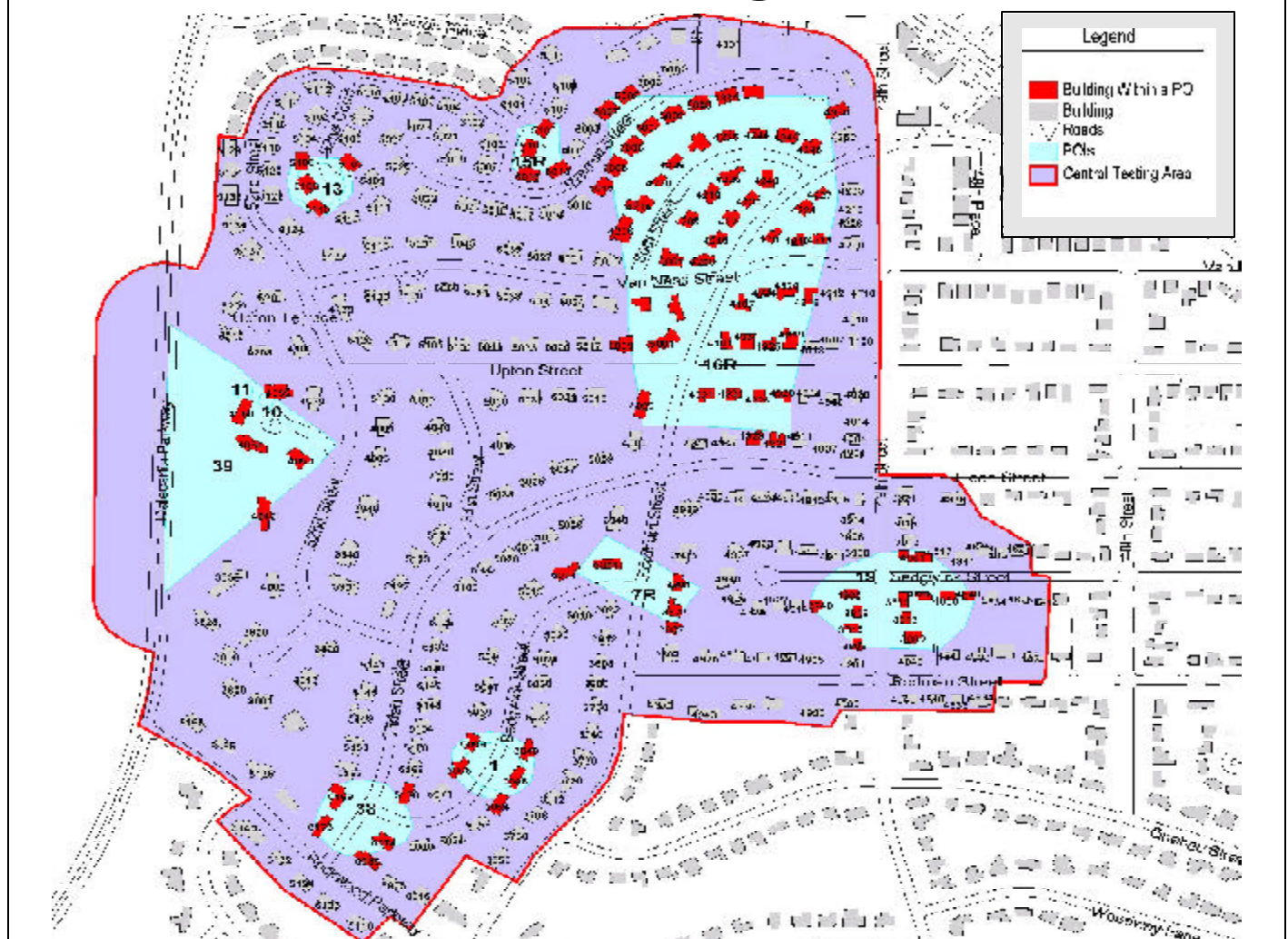
At the June 19 community meeting, we provided an update on the status of the neighborhood-wide soil sampling that began May 31.

To date, our field teams have completed sampling at approximately 120 properties — property owners who requested priority sampling. These are properties with young children, a pending real estate transaction or a health-related issue.

We have now moved to sampling properties within the central testing area or CTA.

This is the area where we believe, from historical records, a majority of the field-testing was performed during the operation of the American University

### Central Testing Area



Experiment Station between 1917 and 1919.

Our plan is to complete the CTA sampling by mid-August. From the CTA, we will begin sampling the other areas of the neighborhood and then move to testing non-residential lots.

### **Right of Entry**

If you are a property owner and want to have your property sampled, but have not completed a right-of-entry form, we encourage you to review, sign and return the form as soon as possible.

If you need a copy of the 2001 right-of-entry form, call the information line at 1-800-434-0988 or Melissa Jones, Corps of Engineers Real Estate Office, at 410-962-5166. You can also download a copy from the Spring Valley Internet web site at: <http://www.nab.usace.army.mil/projects/WashingtonDC/springvalley.htm>.

Once you submit the form, you should receive a copy of the form with a signature from the government in about two weeks. If you've submitted a right-of-entry form more than two weeks ago and have not received an executed copy of the form, please call us.

### **Sampling process**

A representative of the Corps of Engineers or our contractor will contact you at least three working days prior to the date that your property is to be sampled.

At that time, we will establish a three-day sampling window for your property, discuss the areas on your property to be sampled and answer any questions you might have regarding this work. The Corps representative will also doublecheck with you to find out if you plan to be present on the date your property is sampled.

It is not necessary for you to be present during the sampling. We will also verify with you any

property improvements, such as underground sprinkler systems that sampling crews need to be aware of prior to the work.

If we are unable to reach you, we will leave a phone message and a door hanger telling of the planned sampling period and other information.

**It will be your responsibility to contact us if you wish a different sampling date. Also, if you know you do not want sampling during a certain time, please call our information line or send a note with your right-of-entry form.**

On the day your property is to be sampled, contract personnel will enter your property, identify the sampling locations, gather a small amount of surface soil and in some cases, a small amount of subsurface soil, and then exit your property. The work should take no more than a few hours.

The soil from your property will be sent to an EPA-approved laboratory to be tested and analyzed for arsenic and any other compounds as identified in the final area-wide soil sampling plan.

Given the volume of samples, we estimate it will be about 45 days from the date your property is sampled before we will have the final arsenic sampling results for your property.

The estimated time to receive the sampling results for the other compounds is about two months.



**A Corps contract worker takes a soil sample.**

Each property owner will receive a copy of the results with a letter explaining what the results mean in terms of comparison to background levels and health risk levels.

The details of the letter are currently being addressed by the RAB.

If your property would happen to have elevated levels of the compounds of concern, we will contact you to arrange for more detailed testing of your property.

The Corps will be responsible for costs associated with any removal action deemed necessary from the sampling, as well as any subsequent property restoration that may be required.

During this effort we will continue to update the community on the status of the sampling through this newsletter, meetings and the project's website.

# Corps continues work at Glenbrook Rd., AU and Sedgwick St.

The Corps has begun investigating the remaining test pit at 4825 Glenbrook Road.

In May, one unfused and unfired 75mm mortar, one crushed five-gallon metal can, 10 three-inch glass bottles and other broken glassware were found. Recently, six 75mm rounds (one fused) and 11 bottles were found.

To date, no chemical agents or breakdown products have been detected during work at this property.

Elsewhere on Glenbrook Road, preliminary restoration activities continue at 4801 Glenbrook.

Restoration plans for the Small Disposal Area and adjoining streambed are being developed. The Corps recently received comments from American University, D.C. Health and EPA regard-

ing the draft risk assessment for 4835 Glenbrook. These comments are being incorporated into the final risk assessment document for this property.

The Corps recently sent the results from the additional sampling at the American University Child Development Center playground to EPA, D.C. Health and American University. It will likely take several weeks to analyze these results to determine if any risks are present.

Elsewhere on the AU campus, the preliminary results for grid sampling for arsenic show 16 of 476 samples were over 43 parts-per-million, or ppm. However, all 16 were below 82 ppm. The draft risk assessments for the eight properties with elevated levels of arsenic are being completed now.

The results of the quadrant composite sampling at the Horace Mann Elementary School and the Metropolitan Methodist Church have not been received yet.

Surface and subsurface sampling were completed at seven properties in the old trench system on Sedgwick Street on April 5.

Preliminary results indicate elevated arsenic in four of the seven properties. Grid sampling is being conducted on these three properties, but the results have not come back yet.

There are also two anomalies on two other properties in this area that will be further investigated once the safety plan is approved by the Department of the Army.

## Sampling Schedule

It is a difficult task to develop a detailed sampling schedule as there are changes to the schedule on a daily basis.

Schedule changes may result from special requests received due to real estate transactions, residents choosing not to have the sampling performed, or residents asking for the sampling to be rescheduled due to vacations or other schedule conflicts.

In addition, we cannot sample on a scheduled property if a signed right of entry has not been returned to us.

We have developed a general schedule for sampling the neighborhood which assumes that we have all rights of entry. This should give residents a general idea of how we will proceed, but residents should

keep in mind that this schedule will be subject to daily changes. We are still exploring ways to make available a more detailed schedule that can be kept up-to-date with daily changes.

Our sampling plan will follow this general schedule:

**May 30 to Aug 14** - Central Testing Area (CTA) (see p. 1 map)

**Aug 15 to Sep 27** - Residential properties outside the CTA and south of Massachusetts Avenue, generally working from north to south

**Sep 28 to Oct 29** - Residential properties north of Massachusetts Avenue

**Oct 30 to Nov 1** - American University campus areas not yet sampled

**Nov 2 to Nov 12** - Federal property near Dalecarlia reservoir

## Meeting Notice

The next community meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday, August 7, at 7 p.m., at the Metropolitan Memorial United Methodist Church, 3401 Nebraska Avenue.**

Dr. Steven Lamm, M.D., D.T.P.H., will be one of the speakers. Lamm is a consultant from Consultants in Epidemiology and Occupational Health, Inc.

He is an environmental/occupational epidemiologist with expertise in arsenic exposure and risk assessment. He will address questions on the potential effects of arsenic.





Department of the Army  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
Baltimore District  
P.O. Box 1715  
Baltimore, MD 21203-1715

Official Business

PRE-SORTED  
FIRST CLASS MAIL  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
MAIL ADVERTISING  
SERVICES, INC  
20850

## Restoration Advisory Board meets again

The Spring Valley Restoration Advisory Board met for the second time on June 13.

RAB members agreed that residents should sign and return the current right-of-entry form so the Corps can move forward with conducting the area-wide soil sampling. Once the outstanding issues with right of entry are resolved, and the RAB concurs with the additional language, the Corps will enact an amendment to the already signed right-of-entry forms and send the amendment to all Spring Valley residents for their records.

The RAB is also looking into the content of the letter that will be sent to individual property owners beginning in mid-July. This letter will accompany the soil sampling results and provide

an explanation of what the results mean.

The RAB agreed to provide input into the development of this letter and will discuss this issue in detail before the next RAB meeting, July 10. The Corps will prepare a draft copy of this letter for the RAB to review and discuss at the July meeting.

In addition to these discussions, the Corps provided a presentation on risk assessments. The presentation revolved around the development and use of screening levels and remediation levels, and background arsenic concentrations within Spring Valley.

In other news, RAB member Sarah S. Shapley was elected the RAB's community co-chair. She will work with the Corps' RAB

co-chair, Maj. Michael Peloquin, on developing RAB agendas and facilitating communication among the other RAB members.

The RAB agreed that future monthly RAB meetings would be held on the second Tuesday of every month from 7 – 9:30 p.m.

**The next RAB meeting on July 10 will be at St. David's Episcopal Church, 5150 Macomb Street, N.W., Washington, D.C.** The public is welcome to attend.

To view minutes of past RAB meetings or to contact the RAB, please visit the Spring Valley website at <http://www.nab.usace.army.mil/projects/WashingtonDC/springvalley.htm>. You may also call the project information line at 1-800-434-0988.

### *The Corps' pondent*

*The Corps' pondent* is an unofficial publication authorized under the provisions of AR360-81 and published by the Public Affairs Office, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Baltimore District, P.O. Box 1715, Baltimore, Md. 21203-1715. Telephone: (410) 962-2809; fax: (410) 962-3660, Spring Valley Information Line (1-800-434-0988). It is printed on recyclable paper; press run 1,200. All manuscripts submitted are subject to editing and rewriting. Material from this publication may be reproduced without permission. Views and opinions are not necessarily those of the Department of the Army. Project web page: <http://www.nab.usace.army.mil/projects/WashingtonDC/springvalley.htm>

**Baltimore Commander & District Engineer** ..... Col. Charles J. Fiala, Jr.  
**Deputy District Engineer, Spring Valley** ..... Maj. Michael Peloquin  
**Public Affairs Chief** ..... Lucy Lather  
**Public Affairs Specialist** ..... Doug Garman